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of stone, whereas Colonel Collinson finds it to consist of regular voussoirs of three or four to the span. It is possibly the oldest specimen of the true arch extant in Europe. There are other instances among the ruins, of spurious arches; namely, horizontal lintels of stone, whose under sides have been hewed away. One of these is found in the gallery leading to the Vasilospito, and another forms an entrance through the city walls. The walls consist of polygonal stones that average  $3 \times 2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}$  feet in size, and are laid together without mortar. The theatres and other objects were minutely described by Colonel Collinson, who exhibited photographs of the ruins, taken at the time of his visit.

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2. *Explorations in Vancouver Island.* By Commander RICHARD C. MAYNE, R.N., F.R.G.S.

ALBERNIE is a deep bay on the western coast of Vancouver Island, and lies in about the same latitude as Nanaimo and Namoose, on the eastern shore. No overland communication between them had been attempted previously to Captain Mayne's journey, which was set on foot in order to discover whether any overland route was possible.

Two prominent mountains, called Arrowsmith and Moriarty, stand on either side of the direct line of communication. It was satisfactorily ascertained during the journey that they were connected by a high snow-covered ridge, which made it out of the question to establish a road between them. The actual route followed by Captain Mayne, lay to the north of these mountains, and passed alongside a small lake; then it bent considerably to the south, in order to strike its eastern destination. There are no natural difficulties in this circuitous track, to interfere with the establishment of a road, if exception be made of the shores of the small lake, where further inspection appears advisable. The greater part of the way lies over level country well suited for settlement, and the highest pass need not exceed 700 feet.

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3. *British Columbia.* By WILLIAM KELLY, Esq., F.R.G.S.

THE object of Mr. Kelly was to invite attention to the disadvantages under which British Columbia labours, owing to the expense and delay of communicating with the mother country. He described its climate and productions as closely corresponding to those of England, and eminently suited to British emigrants, who, however, as a class, were debarred from going there by the long voyage round Cape Horn, or by the shorter, though costly, route across Panama.

He also described its varied mineral products; and gave data, from which he estimated the yield of gold, since its first discovery in 1858, or during the last two and a half years, at 1,200,000%. He then showed that the direct line from Canada, mostly through British territory and through the Vermilion Pass, was of such a nature that, by using existing railroads and establishing an overland mail of the same character as those established elsewhere in America, twenty-five days would suffice for communicating between Portland on the Atlantic and New Westminster on the Pacific. The author looked forward to the time when a chain of settlements should connect Canada with the Rocky Mountains; through which emigrants with their cattle and family waggons could travel leisurely and securely, where wants could be recruited and accidents repaired, while a still poorer class of men might work their way, step by step, to their goal.

The CHAIRMAN said the subject of British Columbia had been brought before them on previous occasions by their medallist Palliser, and more particularly by Dr. Hector, who had especially pointed out the desirability of opening a passenger route over the Vermilion Pass. The subject was indeed worthy of the consideration of the Society. With regard to the development of gold, it seemed to him that this country was about to open out to us a complete new California, and that the very same ridge which had been found to be auriferous all through the chain of the Andes—not the Rocky mountains, but a chain considerably to the westward of it—had been found to be auriferous all the way northward, extending through British Columbia, and probably extending to Russian North America. Captain Mayne, in addition to his exploration of Vancouver Island, had also penetrated into the interior of British Columbia; and he would, therefore, call upon him to communicate what he had seen of the wealth and productions of this vast region.

CAPTAIN MAYNE said, as the road from the eastward across the Rocky Mountains had been referred to, he would make a few observations upon that topic. That route was by no means so practicable as people thought, and those companies who talked about driving four-horse spring waggons from the Lake of the Woods to British Columbia, would either starve the people they took or leave them in the Rocky Mountains, for they would certainly never get them over them. Dr. Hector, Palliser, or Blakiston, who had explored the country, would tell them they had the greatest difficulty in getting their horses through the passes. They had to stop and cut through fallen timber, and it took them many days, going about a mile an hour. Although ultimately this road might be made, yet at present we were much too sanguine about it; and emigrants who thought of going by that route would feel most grievously disappointed, that is, if they lived to be disappointed, which he rather doubted. The better-known way by Victoria had been frequently described. The emigrants could either go from New York by steamer to Panama, or by our own steamers from St. Thomas to Panama, then up by the American steamer to San Francisco, and thence on to Victoria. New York was the best point to start from, because they avoided being kept waiting at Panama, a circumstance which frequently occurred, by taking our West India mail-steamer. Having reached Victoria, the first start was to New Westminster by steamer. From New Westminster, to go to Cariboo, they went up the Fraser River and Harrison Lake to Fort Douglas, where they left the steamer. They then traversed a road, which waggons could be driven along with the greatest ease, constructed last year

by the Royal Engineers. He had himself walked 30 miles easily in the day, which showed that the road was pretty good. Then they crossed the Lillooet Lake, a distance of 15 miles to Pemberton. Here they came upon another trail for 25 miles up to Anderson Lake, which is 14 miles long. There were two lakes, Anderson and Seton, both of which are 14 miles long, separated from each other by a narrow neck of land of about a mile or a mile and a half. That brought them to Kayouth. This place Kayouth could also be reached by the Fraser River. Instead of going up to Fort Douglas, they could go to Fort Hope by the steamer, and possibly if the stream was not very rapid they could get to Yale. At Yale the rapids commenced, where the river rushed between immense perpendicular rocks so rapidly that no steamer could possibly get through them. Sometimes the current came down at 17 or 18 knots. He timed it at 16 knots, but the water was not then at its highest. From Yale to Lytton he found the trail excessively dangerous. At some parts he went round the face of the rocks on poles hung from the tops of the cliffs with deers' hide, and he hung over the cliff at an altitude of 300 feet perpendicular above the river below, and the only means of proceeding with safety was by pressing close against the face of the rock. That danger had since been avoided by the trail being cut at the back of the rock. They then crossed the river, and the trail was very good for some way farther. But on the whole that was not so easy a route as by Harrison Lake, on which all the work was done by horses and mules. From Kayouth they could either cross the river at once, or cross higher up and then keep the east bank to Fountain and Pavillon. From Pavillon there were two trails. One led up by the Fraser, passable only to foot passengers, to Alexandria, and then up to Fort St. George; and as the Hudson's Bay Company had constant communication with Fort James, Fort George and M'Leod's Fort, no doubt the trail led up to them. The road by which the diggings were reached went east along the Pavillon Lake, till it met the Chapeau and Bonaparte and Bentinck River. It crossed them and went to the northward up the valley of the Bonaparte River, past several small lakes and rivers, to the Quesnelle Lake, and that brought you at once to the Cariboo country. Very rich diggings were worked the year before last on the Quesnelle Lake; but the diggings in Cariboo were found to be so much richer, that all the miners left for Cariboo, and rushed up to Swift River and the little streams in the neighbourhood.

With respect to the richness of the Cariboo diggings, he had no doubt the account of Mr. Fraser, the *Times* correspondent, was perfectly correct. Mr. Nind, the gold commissioner in that country, who was at present in England, told him the other day that he saw three men take up the sluices, which are the trays at the bottom of the troughs in which the gold is washed, after one day's work, and take out 195 ounces of gold—all but five dollars. It would give some idea of the size of the lumps of gold to hear that there was no quick-silver used at Cariboo, the fine gold being allowed to pass away. On one occasion some men realised 9000 dollars of gold as the result of three months' labour. They said they were getting 25 dollars a-day. Other men reported having got 73 ounces in a day, and that food and everything there were comparatively cheap. During the first winter the great difficulty was to get food. Two months before his arrival at Pavillon they were paying 75 cents per lb. for flour. That was before this route by Harrison Lake was opened.

It was a great question now in the colony whether some route would not be found to Cariboo easier than by going up the whole length of the Fraser River, which was very rapid even as far as it was navigable. It was thought by many that some route would be found from one of the inlets which indent the whole coast, which would afford a much shorter and easier way. With this object nearly all the inlets had been examined. The one which was at present engrossing the attention of the colony was the route from Bellhoola or Bell-whoola, at the head of the Bentinck arm. This was the route by which Sir Alexander Mackenzie crossed in 1789. He went up the West Road River, then

came down on the Bentinck arm at Bellhoola, to which he gave the name of Rascal's village. Last year Mr. Mackenzie, one of the Hudson's Bay officers, and Mr. Barnston, crossed from Alexandria to Bentinck arm in almost a direct line. They took eleven days to cross, and Mr. Barnston, in a letter to Mr. Nind, stated that the trail for the whole distance from Alexandria to the coast range was on a kind of table-land, which was studded in every direction with immense meadows. He said he thought the journey might be performed easily in ten days. Another route had been tried by Mr. Macdonald, coming down the Stuart River to Fort George, which promised some day to be the route to Cariboo, leaving out the Fraser altogether.

DR. RÆ knew nothing of the country west of the Rocky Mountains; but with regard to the eastern country from Lake Winnipeg and Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains, he had been over that part only so late as last year. As to the facilities of travelling over it, he could not agree with the author of the paper. Some years hence there might be roads and facilities similar to what Mr. Kelly contemplated; but at the present time they certainly did not exist. He would describe his own experience last year with a hunting party. They took four days from Toronto to St. Paul; from that to Red River occupied nine days. From Red River up west to the south Saskatchewan, travelling very hard, having excellent horses and two horses to each man, it took them from sixteen to eighteen days. They were then eight or ten days from the Rocky Mountains. They travelled at least double the rate that any party going with one horse could travel. Therefore he came to the conclusion that it would at least take ten weeks to reach the Rocky Mountains from England, in the present state of the country. Regarding the game in that country, the young gentlemen of the party were anxious to kill any and all kinds of game. They travelled over several hundred miles before they could kill an animal larger than a badger. They had the ablest hunters in the country, all picked men, the Red River half-breds, and their object was entirely to kill game. Yet that was the result of their hunting. They should have starved had they not carried plenty of provisions with them. Had they been a large party, such as that contemplating to go out there, they could not possibly have got provisions at the Hudson's Bay Company establishments. The buffalo are so peculiar in their migrations, that they travelled for hundreds of miles over one of the finest old buffalo prairies in that part of the world and did not see a single animal. The Indians were starving, could not get anything to eat, and were obliged to eat the skins. They travelled over a better route for game than emigrants would take. Going up to the Red River settlement, which is easily arrived at from Canada in twelve or fifteen days by steamer, the usual time from the settlement to the Rocky Mountains was from forty-five to fifty days with carts. One gentleman came from Edmonton, which was six or eight days from the Rocky Mountains, in nineteen days last year; but he had three relays of horses, with three horses to each man, and he travelled day and night. Therefore he agreed with Captain Mayne that it would be very dangerous indeed for any large body of men to attempt to reach the Fraser River by that route. He thought it would be attended with a sacrifice of life. In Canada last year the idea of opening up this route had excited a good deal of attention, and numerous letters had appeared on the subject. The advantage of going round by Victoria is that they can start at any season of the year. They can go in a vessel nearly the whole way, and they can take baggage and all that they want to the diggings. If they went by the Rocky Mountains and got to the diggings, they would have to obtain the articles that they wanted there, instead of taking them round in a vessel with them and going up the Fraser River. In saying this, he was only speaking of what he would do himself. Whether as a rich man or as a poor man, he would not in the present state of the country recommend a single individual to try the overland route.

After some remarks from the REV. J. GARRETT, urging the immediate value

of Columbia as a field for British emigration and the practicability of an over-land route to that colony, and on the value of Indian labour,

CAPTAIN MAYNE replied that Mr. Garrett entirely mistook both himself and Dr. Rae in supposing they were of opinion that the route across the Rocky Mountains would never be made. All that they said was that the parties who were advertising to send "four-horse spring waggons" by the Rocky Mountain route would starve the people whom they took. Mr. Garrett, in dealing with the question of emigration, had left out of consideration the expense of living after people reached the colony. It was an exceedingly expensive colony, and it would not do for the Government or for societies to send people, especially women, to British Columbia and drop them there. If they were now sent by sea round Cape Horn, they would land at Victoria in the middle of winter, and it would be impossible for them to get to the diggings till the spring; therefore, they would have to wait four or five months at Victoria doing nothing, and where they could not get a dinner under a dollar. The question of Indian labour was too large a question to be entered into. If anybody wanted to know anything about their character, he could not do better than look to the printed journals of Mr. Duncan, who was by far the most experienced missionary in that country. With respect to the country of the Saskatchewan River, Mr. Hind did not give a flourishing account of it as suitable for a roadway. Captain Palliser says of it in the Blue Book, that "it is too tedious, difficult, and expensive for the generality of settlers." A great deal of it would have to be piled, before anything like a good road could be made. This was another reason why emigrants should not be sent that way at present. Mr. Garrett was mistaken in thinking the Indians would ever work as miners. They got the coal at the pit's mouth and carried it down in little baskets to their canoes, that was all; and he knew the manager he referred to would never think of sending them into the pit to work out the coal, and their doing anything could never be depended on. Mr. Pemberton's evidence respecting the interior, he would receive with great caution, because it was well-known he had never travelled in the interior. He once went to Yale, sixty miles up the river, and he once made a short journey across the island; but as to the interior of the country, Mr. Pemberton knew it merely from hearsay or the same reports to which they all had access.

The CHAIRMAN, before adjourning the sitting, introduced M. Jules Gérard, the well-known "lion-slayer" of Algeria, and announced that on a future occasion that gentleman would bring under notice a project of his own for the formation of a Society (*Société Africaine*) connected with discoveries in the interior of Africa, and in furtherance of the objects of the Acclimatization Society of Paris.

The meeting was then adjourned to the Anniversary on the 26th of May.

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